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ABSTRACT

This discussion suggests ways to (1) improve parents' communication with their children; (2) provide students with the keys to freedom through self-discipline; (3) increase parents' involvement in their children's learning in the areas of reading, mathematics, science, social studies, creative arts, and health and physical education; (4) recognize learning disabilities; (5) help children learn to read; (6) prevent school failures; (7) help children benefit from homework; and (8) teach children to swim, bicycle, and ride the school bus safely, as well as to take safety precautions against fire, falls, poisons, workshop hazards, and dangerous toys. (RH)

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Parents Always Matter in Education ! Boris Blai, Jr.

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"My father knew all my faults, but to hear him talk (and in my presence, at that) you would think I had few equals. He showed in a hundred ways that he approved of me. When I disappointed him, he never showed anger, but instead assured me that he knew I would do better next time, that I could do great things. Everyone should have one person somewhere in his life like my father."

- William Jeffries

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Overview

"Everyone knows that", you say. Yet, were this literally true; i.e., that parents do always matter in the education of their children, many a child would avoid accidents; many school failures would never happen; much more effective learning would occur.

Some of the many ways parents can actively participate in their childrens' learning is the principal thrust of this document. Discussed are parental attitudes; approaches; actions - suggested ways to encourage; enhance; ensure effective learning among children.

For parents, 4 effective 'keys' to communications with children are:

1- When you feel yourself about to 'sermon' - ask for further information: turn the discussion back to the child.

2- When you are tempted to declare how "wong" your child is - ask for clarification; ask your child to explain the problem. Often a child will feel free to reveal inner problems if no threat of a "judge's sentance" is feared.

3- When a 'nagging session' threatens - try humor instead. Nagging destroys communications; humor will often salvage it.

4- When strong emotional stress is evident - constructive/productive dialogue simply does not occur. Let the emotions simmer down; hold off talking out the problem until later.

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Freedom Through Discipline

Teachers know that parents are the real key to discipline. But - all too frequently kids think of discipline as a punishment that parents use against them. Too often this is true - we do view discipline as something we must do to keep our kids in line. But consider - is this truely what we want and expect discipline

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to be - a 'lid' to restrain kids? Not at all, really. The end-product we are after in discipline is to encourage and reinforce certain kinds of behavior; e.g., as they grow and develop, we want our children to learn and adopt responsible; considerate; mature behavior patterns. In effect - through discipline, we try to provide kids with keys to freedom.

In support of this view, consider the following:

1- As responsible adults we discipline ourselves to stop at a red light; a STOP sign. We drive in the right hand lane: we yield to other traffic at a YIELD sign. Having learned these rules of the road, most of us follow them 'automatically', without consci ously thinking about them each time the need arises to apply an appropriate road-rule. Now - what this also means is that we thereby become free to concentrate on other things; e.g., real emergency situation road conditions such as wet, slick roads; congested traffic; snow or other hazardous driving conditions.

2- Most individuals learn to discipline themselves ro respect the property of others; most people do not steal. This is another key to freedom; the freedom from worry about the consequences we face if we do not refrain from stealing, and the freedom to build one's self-respect by exercising such self-discipline.

3- Yet another freedom key - when we discipline ourselves to do our expected daily work; i.e., when expected and how well required to be done, we remain free from the pressures, tensions, and hassles that do result when tasks are left undone or poorly done.

4- In precisely this same vein, discipline can free children from all sorts of needless pressures; tensions; anxieties; both in school and at home. It can permit them to appropriately concentrate their efforts on constructive, useful learning activities. It can help them develop positive, considerate relationships with others.

How do we get children to develop genuine personal discipline; i.e., self-imposed guidelines of behavior? Frankly, it is not an easy task, but it can

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be accomplished through the cooperative efforts of parents and teachers carrying out their respective responsibilities toward the child.

Among the first things to be done - children must be taught that every student in every class has an equal right to the learningbenefits, maximum, that class offers. They must learn, and we adults must teach - by precept - that the only truely effective discipline is self-imposed discipline. Such discipline yields the greatest possible freedom for the most kids - equally; fairly. This is simply another way of saying that every child should enjoy total freedom to learn!

In specific actions, how can parents help kids develop self-discipline? Following are some tips teachers in the Pennsylvania State Educational Association (PSEA) suggest to help in this challenging/demanding task. They identify the great importance of planned strategies to help insure the development of such self-discipline.

A program which PSEA sponsors is the LEAST project. It has received national attention, and by 1984 some 10,000 PSEA members had taken part in intensive workshop training in LEAST. (Details on LEAST may be obtained from PSEA, Box 1724, Harrisburg, Penna.) In brief - LEAST aims at identifying ongoing disruptive behavior; finding out what is causing it; and then doing something to stop it by helping the child to replace the behavior with more constructive behavior. It also directs attention to reducing overreaction to childish behavior which often is simply an expression of the moment rather than a symptom of a deeper problem.

In helping children develop self-discipline, specific tips include:

1- Let children know what is expected of them;- Your high expectations and encouragement-reinforcement when the child does evidence self-discipline often provides surprising and pleasing long-term results. The opposite, of course, is equally true; i.e., low expectations and the absence of encouragement

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responses usually produces poor results. Do make it very clear just how you expect the child to behave - and why; whether they be at home; in school; visiting others; anywhere else.

2- Be considerate:- be consistent!

When parents respond to a situation first one way, and then take a totally different position when it occurs again, kids get very frustrated - wouldn't you ? ! If you inform them on Monday that throwing a tantrum or reacting physically to other kids is out of line - than it should apply equally on Friday!

3- Avoid showing your child there's a 'payoff' for bad behavior:-

You can pretty well count on it; if kids know they can get an ice cream cone or other treat by whining, sulking or screaming - they will try to repeat that kind of extortion behavior.

4- Do praise good behavior:-

There is certainly nothing wrong with letting children know their behavior has been pleasing. Smiles can be powerful approval rewards, as can such comments as "That was very nice. It was what I expected you to do."

5- Express your beliefs:-

Let them know by saying so; and tell them why! Being considerate of others excludes such behavior as teasing handicapped children, or being loud and boiserous in a classroom or theatre where others have come to hear something more important to them. Children want and need constructive guidance. You certainly help them by telling them how you feel, (amd why), about drinking, smoking, being a bully, monopolizing conversations.

6- Point out consequences of their behavior:-

Let them know that damaged school equipment and torn up or grafitti-filled textbooks means higher costs (taxes!) for everyone - and that means less chance for someone else to learn. Let them know, calmly and firmly, that you thoroughly disapprove of such

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thoughtless behavior.

7- As they grow, let children make more decisions:- When you feel their judgement warrents it, encourage them to make decisions. For example - in answer to the question, "What time do I have to come home?", your response might be, "What time do you think you should be home?" Such recognition may hasten their acquiring a more advanced sense of self-discipline.

8- Listen - attentively, carefully, to what your children have to say:- Should a child do something disruptive or destructive, find out why. Often the answer leads to a strong concern on the part of the child - one you may not have been aware of before.

9- Chart your child's behavior:- A regular disruptive or destructive pattern of behavior may indicate a problem requiring professional help. You may also find that a misbehavior pattern is not as frequent as you believed, or conversely that one of your children is misbehaving more than you thought.

10- Work cooperatively with teachers:- When parents and teachers work indepently of each other, for what they honestly consider to be the best welfare of the child, a discipline vacuum may arise; probably nothing destroys discipline more effectively. When parents consult with their child's teachers, to the child this is often 'proof positive' that they care about them. Specifically, parents can:

(1) Call the teacher: A deep disappointment for a child; e.g., a family death; divorce; cancelled vacation; embarassing personal physical problem - can lead to defensive behavior erupting into serious discipline problems, Do consult the teacher if the child has suffered a traumatic experience. Together, parent and teacher may do together something which will help ease the child's fear; perhaps even turning it into a positive learning experience for the child.

(2) Support teacher organization efforts for strong school discipline

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policy: Let the school board know that proper discipline of your child is one of your priority concerns. Most especially, support teacher organization efforts to have disciplinary policy statements written into their contracts when strong help from school administrations for such firm, fair policies is not there. Conversely - when the administration does give strong support in formulating a sound disciple policy-program, let both them and your child know that you firmly endorse such action.

(3) Become involved in your parent-teacher organization: You share, with them, a common objective - a sound and stimulating educational program for your child. Do reinforce each other's efforts, and discover the strength of both ideas and support to be found in such a common, cooperative effort.

11- In summary, sound didcipline is:

(1) a learning process.

(2) a key to freedom for more constructive interpersonal relationships.

(3) a process which may involve punishment; when needed.

(4) a cooperative endeavor for parents, teachers, children, school administrators, and parent-teacher organizations.

(5) evidence that you care for your child's well-being, and that - in truth - this is the most you can do for your child.

12- A most important consideration in discipline is to recognize - and accept - that caring can mean punishing, when appropriate. Teaching a child discipline does not, automatically, mean punishment. However, it is equally true that punishment, upon occassions, may appropriately be a part of the discipline process.

Conclusion::

Teaching children disciplined behavior is a clear demonstration to them that you do have a concerned, sincere care for them. And sometimes this caring must involve quick and firm intervention in the discipline action.

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When such intervention occurs, parents should not send themselves on a guilt trip. They should, instead, maintain their perspective, remembering that through such intervention they seek to help their children make, in time, self-motivated decisions about living and working in harmony with others.

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Join The Fun;
Help Your Kids Learn

Learning lasts as long as life itself. When you take an active role in your child's education you can share the fun and excitement with them as they learn. You can help kindle their curiosity; their enthusiasm; their love of learning.

Obviously, learning does not begin and end in school. Caring parents can also nurture and guide the learning of their children. They can build upon the enthusiasm dedicated teachers bring to the school classroom in which solid foundations for learning are established during early school years. Even before children go off to school, there are practical things parents can do to share and enhance their learning.

Some tips which parents can follow at home are noted below. For convenience, they are organized into five areas: Reading; Math; Science; Social Studies; Creative Arts. They are also aimed at various age levels and interests. Consequently, they should be applied selectively; i.e., pick out and apply the ones that best apply to your child.

Reading:

1- Often read books to your children: short, exciting stories best hold their interest. Talk about the pictures; share the child's excitement.

2- Early on - open the doors to magic - your local library. It's important and 'grown up' for children to have their own library cards as soon as they understand how to use them. (Do resist that temptation to select your children's book. Let you child make choices; help them to learn responsibility)

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3- Sign reading sessions can help break the monotony of boring car rides while serving as valuable reading practice.

4- During shopping trips, encourage reading of signs and posters.

5- Hang chalkboard at home for kid-messages. Be sure they are read; e.g., leave messages frequently which require some kind of kid-response.

6- Use family bulletin board to pin up funny cartoons; magazine articles; silly sayings.

7- Buy a special 'grown up' gift for child - select a good children's magazine: there are many to choose from.

8- If child seems a bit uninterested in reading just leave some books lying abour; i.e., on cars, dolls, animals, some subject of particular interest to child.

9- And - children seeing family adults having a good time with books usually find this an irresistable temptation to get in on the fun.

Math:

1-Introduce your child to the wonderful world of numbers. Use bingo, dominoes, toy telephones, card games, board games, calendars, and clocks with large numbers to practice number identification.

2- Feeling at home with numbers calls for happy first experiences with numbers. Make the learning of them a pleasant, enjoyable experience.

3- You pre-school child's early counting ability can benefit from "rational counting"; i.e., counting for a purpose. Counting out forks for the table; pieces of dessert cake; any other counting having real and immediate meaning; e.g., counting out number of dog bisquit treats; counting out number of cookie treats; etc. provide meaningful practice experiences.

4- Guardagainst passing on negative ideas about math, for it is not, in itself a forbidding subject. Introduced in an up-beat manner, and encouraged/ reinforced in a positive way, it can be a fascinating subject.

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5- As the child's math skills develop, encourage the tackling of more complicated tasks; e.g., checking the addition on the grocery tape; managing an allowance; counting change.

Science:

1- Use the scientific approach to everyday events and problems. Challenge broad, unsupported statements; e.g., ask, "how can we find out if that is true or not?".

2- Give 'science gifts'; e.g., terrarium; chemistry set; science magazine subscription; binoculars; acquarium; etc.

3- Stir child's curiosity by letting them tinker with broken clocks or articles around the house.

4- Let child help with household repairs, making certain child understands what is being done, and why.

5- Collecting things is very natural for children. Let them do so and provide display space where they may 'show-and-tell' their most valued collections.

Social Studies:

1- Expand child's experiences by trips in the community: airports; museums; historic landmarks; factories; newspapers; etc. Always take opportunity to indicate your respect for the various kinds of work being performed: such respect can be contagious.

2- Give child maps and puzzle maps: help to explain what maps mean.

3- Encourage an early interest in books which reflect the extraordinary diversity of America's multi-ethnic culture; another opportunity to teach respect for the various groups which are the American community.

4- Show your child a lively interest and concern for the larger world around you. Read newspapers and magazine articles; discuss current issues and events at the dinner table. Be sure the child is drawn into the discussion, with due regard for their views and comments.

5- By all means take along your child when you vote; a precious right too

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few Americans now exercise!

6- In a word - how willing are you to take the time and effort to share your everyday 'social' experiences? The extent to which you make the effort will, in large measure, determine your child's social growth and appreciation of the people and events in your community. Enrich your child's development - share yourself!

Creative Arts:

1- Crayons, finger paints, modeling clay, and paper - keep your child well-supplied with them. And don't worry too much about the mess; remember how you made one too when you were a kid!

2- Display, proudly, your 'budding artist's' creative achievements. A bulletin board, a door panel - even a wallpaper surface, will serve to encourage your child's creative efforts.

3- There are kits to make holiday art pieces. Your child could probably make some, and more than likely would enjoy doing so.

4- A simple record player and/or singing can reinforce music interests. And putting on a simple puppet show can afford many opportunities for creative expression. Why not help your neighbornood kids put one on.

Health & Physical Ed.

1- Obviously, any health condition of a serious nature should be reported to the school. Personal hygiene and cleanliness should be emphasized frequently, as wellas the need for adequate sleep and proper diet. Talk with your child's physical education teacher and inquire how you may assist in the physical development/ coordination growth of your child.

2- Encourage vigorous daily exercise, for active play builds strong muscles which are, or course, basic to good health and good posture. Stress good sportmanship when you join your child in active games. Encourage both individual and team sports participation as well as other creative physical activities.

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3- Follow through on eye/ear screening and routine immunizations, and always remember that it is health-important to start off each day with a good; i,e, nutritionally-sound breakfast!

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Learning Disabilities:
A Common Problem

Susan, age six, scumbles over words. She reads words out of place. And often she can't tell you what she's reading, even seconds after she puts the book down. However, Susan can add and subtract vetter than many kis her age. And if you ask Susan to, she'll spell the word "Cincinnati" backwards faster than you can say the word. But something just doesn't seem right when it comes to her reading. What's this all about?

Well - it's just possible that Susan, like several million youngsters in the country, have some type of learning disability. No - Susan is not retarded, nor is she "dumb". She does have some trouble though - learning a set of special skills she'll need to fully enjoy the best possible success in school and her later life.

There are other indicators of possible learning disibility. These onclude:

1- Unusually short attention span.

2- Easy distraction.

3- Constant repetition or seemingly irelevant activity; e.g., humming the same tune over-and-over; repetition recitation of a jingle; incessant, seemingly never-ending drumming of a pencil.

4- Poor body coordination.

5- Distorted sensory perception.

6- Constant, no-apparent-reason movements.

7- Temper tantrums reflecting frustration with task at hand.

8- Rapid mood changes; from sad to glad - from lazy to boundless energy.

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9- Unusual memory for apparently unimportant facts

Any or all of these may be indicative of some degree of learning dysfunction. But unfortunately, many parents - because of feelings of fault or embarrassment - hesitate to seek beyond their own family circle for needed professional help. Other common traps for failure to seek help as soon as a problem is suspected include:

1- usually groundless association of learning disabilities with mental retardation, and

2- the common attitude (it's self-deception, really) that the child is simply "going through a phase".

Expert care and help for children with learning disabilities should be sought by parents as soon as they suspect a problem. In Pennsylvania, for example, if parents believe their child needs a special education program to deal with a learning disability, they may request an evaluation by their school district. The district must schedule a conference with them - without charge - within 10 days of receiving the request for evaluation. Should such evaluation show the child to be exceptional, the parents are invited to participate in a meeting to develop an IEP (an Individualized Education Program) for that child. The three basic questions the IEP is designed to answer are: Where is the child now? ; Where should the child be going? ; What's the best way to get there?

There is nothing more precious than a child's future. Concern, and early action, regarding suspected learning disabilities can materially help to assure the future happiness of our children.

* * * * * *

Learning
Successful Reading

"Civilized man is a reader"
- Clifton Fadiman

Do try the following activities with your child:

1- Ask your children to "read" a familiar book to you. They will remember

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some of the words from having heard the story many times; the others they will make up as they go.

2- Memorize a few short poems just because they're fun to say together with your children.

3- Have fun with sounds. Play a game in which you ask your children to name "all the things you can take to Pittsburgh" (a pear, a pie, a piano, a paper; etc), or "all the things you can take to Philadelphia" (a file, a feather, a pheasant, a friend).

4- Tell your children stories about happenings from your own childhood (like the time your father took you fishing and your shoes fell overboard into the lake).

5- Give your child two containers - help them learn to discriminate size by putting large pebbles; or blocks; or other items; into one container, and smaller ones in the other.

6- Sing simple songs together.

7- Invent games that involve classifying, counting, or identifying objects. Use kitchen utensils, crayons, playing cards, etc.

8- when your children relate an experience or a fantasy, write it down just as they tell it for other family members to read later. Let them take pride in keeping the stories they "wrote".

Learning reading successfully depends, in great measure, upon home influences during the pre-school years. Some helpful tips are:

1- If children develop a sense of language in their early years - starting well before their first birthday - their chances of reading success in school are greatly increased.

2- Children who enjoy regular exposure to bedtime stories, rocking songs, counting-out rhythms, alphabet rhymes, nonsense verses, poems and stories - grow up comfortably with words. In addition, they learn how to verbally express their feelings, and learn about the world around them and how to express their feelings

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and observations about the world.

3- Children learn about language when they hear you talk; when they go about their everyday routines of dressing, feeding, rocking, playing - long before they understand the words connected with these activities.

4- By the time children start learning to read, they must employ the language skills of seeing, listening, talking, writing, thinking. Their pre-school years can be filled with activities in which they can practice these skills, thereby finding pleasure in the process of learning how to read.

5- Of course, children take along with them to school their six years or so of living they've spent with their family. The big plus here can be the parents' attitudes. Children who have an adult model to look to - one who finds obvious pleasure in books and reading - sees reading as a way of life. Such children take to words and language 'naturally'. Children, in their early years, living with people who enjoy books, newspapers and magazines, soon cultivate the habit of reading. They do not feel threatened in their learning to use and play with words. Reading and listening to good stories can mean relaxation and good times together with people.

6- Some reading hints which can make reading and books important to the life of your child; e.g.,

(1) Give your children books as gifts on special occassions.

(2) Arrange a reading place away from TV and other distractions.

(3)Provide a special shelf, drawer, or cabinet for your child's own books and records.

(4) Subscribe to a good children's magazine.

(5) Make your local public library a familiar and regular place to visit and relax with books.

(6) Pack a couple of books to take along on vacation trips.

7- Words can be fun! Experimenting with the sounds of language; playing

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with words; telling favorite stories - all can promote in children beginnings of a love for learning; the spirit of exploration; a healthy curiosity. These are characteristics which contribute to successful learning, be it in school or at home.

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Help Prevent
School Failures

Most school failures can be traced to pre-school and early school experiences. They are symptoms of problems the failing student is experiencing, either at home, in school or within the community. Few children can accept failures without suffering serious consequences, for failures can destroy the child's motivation to learn, as well as shatter their emotional stability. The prevention of such failures is therefore of vital importance to the child's growth and development.

Today, many of the causes for school failures and academic underachievement can be identified. And so, prevention is possible, in most cases. Such causes include:

1- A child living in a two-room apartment with nine ofthers may not do passing schoolwork because it is not possible to study sufficiently or properly due to crowding, distractions, etc.

2- A house filled with parent-family tensions and constant bickering is a poor environment for contributing to school success.

3- Constant parental pressure to earn college admissions grades can force children to live under constant stress while being forced to work beyond their capacity.

4- Too much socializing, along with too little studying, can often lead to falling behind in schoolwork and never catching up sufficiently to earn passing grades.

5- Children of affluence can find schoolwork, by comparison with stimulating non-school experiences, comparatively uninteresting and too demanding of effort. Perceptive, knowledgeable parents and teachers must help children

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develop a perspective to balance both schoolwork and other life-activities.

6- Children from poverty-stricken families may be far behind the development of children from more affluent homes. They may begin school 'deficient' in what they know about books, colors, numbers, planning and organizing their waking hours. They may feel so lost, so rejected, and always scratching to just learn what others bring with them as 'know-how' when they start school. This can discourage them to the point where they simply quit trying; they give up on school learning!

7- Deficient school systems may also be at fault; e.g., understaffed; insufficient specialized personnel to encourage those recognized or diagnosed as potential-failure students; poor, crowed facilities; outdated materials, curriculum.

8- However - it is parents who are the key persons in the prevention of school failures. They help their children set standards, select realistic goals, and determine priorities and values. It is their responsibility to establish a home environment which permits their children to feel comfortable and secure; a climate in which their children care about and will focus attention on their schoolwork.

9- Speficially, parents can:

(1) Help their child learn that school attendance is important to them. That it is desirable, and that other matters should not have priority over school attendance.

(2) Insure that their children receive regular examinations to discover health problems which might interfere with their top performance capabilities in learning.

(3) Show on-going interest in the child's school performance, offering suggestions for home and community resources of possible help and interest. Assiduously refrain from doing the child's homework.

(4) Help children see that learning can be an on-going source of pleasure; that learning can be achieved in many ways.

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(5) Insure that some part of the house, at the same part of the day, is set aside for study; quiet, undistracted study.

(6) Refrain from creating in children a paralyzing fear of failure. Help children develop a healthy mental attitude toward failure-disappointment so that it can be coped with, should it occur.

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The Parent's
Role in Homework

Homework can be one of the most valuable tools as your child's learning proceeds. Adapted to your child's capacity, it can provide enriching experiences. Rather than being monotonous busywork, it can challenge your child's abilities, fostering a strong desire to learn - both in and out of school.

Through regular, planned homework assignments, the following benefits may be realized:

1- Learning to work independently.

2- To organize time.

3- Use good study skills.

4- Develop discipline through accepting responsibility for completed work.

To maximine the potential benefits of homework for the child, parents can materially help by:

1- Assisting with the reviews and drills that require memory testing.

2- Help find resource materials to facilitate the completion of homework assignments.

3- Suggest ideas for homework projects.

4- Insure that the child has sufficient time to complete assigned work and that the assignment is done carefully.

5- Cooperatively set a study schedule, establishing firm guidelines for telephone use, watching TV, listening to records.

6- Through patient encouragement, help the child to gradually convert

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parent-discipline to self-discipline. Do praise those things the child does well.

7- Above all - consistently stress the value of homework, and encourage your child's creativity and initiative rather than you giving the answers .

8- Careful study is never hurried! Being impatient with your child or criticizing genuine efforts can help destroy educational motivation and initiative.

Successful completion of homework can foster self-confidence and self-esteem. Help your child effectively complete homework assignments and thereby derive the full benefits of this valuable learning technique.

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Kids & Safety

The safe behavior and safety-aware attitudes parents can teach their children early in their lives are carried into adolescence and adulthood, frequently. Constant reinforcement of such behavior and thoughts (i.e. attitudes), is the major role parents can play in their children learning to live-and-think safety.

An accident-free adult life has its roots in the powerful influence of the original safety educator - parents. What they bring to this task of think-and-live safety is a keystone contribution. Unfortunately, many childhood accidents result from a lack of parental supervision/instruction, or parents unwittingly teaching their children attitudes and habits which invite serious accidents!

Sobering safety statstics stae:

1- Accidents are the largest single cause of deaths among children under 15.

2- One out of each three children who die is the victim of an accident.

3- Accidents kill more than the five leading diseases combined !!

To reduce these appalling figures, all parents should heed the following saftey tips and precautions:

Fire:

1- Keep matches and lighters out of the reach of toddler and older children.

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2- Keep pot handles turned inward on the stove and away from reaching hands.

3- If you burn leaves or rubbish keep an eye on the little ones. Don't let them play around the fire - ever!

4- Plan and show your children emergency fire escape routes. Periodic fire drills are a good idea.

5- Keep bedroom doors closed at night. It takes fire from 10 to 15 minutes to burn through a wooden door, delaying the spread of the fire and allowing more time to escape.

6- Cover unused electrical outlets.

Falls:

1- Caution your children about running in the house.

2- Gates should guard the tops and bottoms of stairs until children can climb safely.

3-Keep stairs and floors clear of tripping hazards - and be sure throw-runs are non-skid.

4- Keep crib sides up, and never leave infants alone on a bed, bath table, or chair.

Poisons:

1- A locked cabinet is the safest place for household cleaners, bleaches, waxes, kerosene, insecticides - even cosmetics.

2- Always store such household agents in their original cartons.

3- Keep medicine out of a child's reach - including aspirin; the most common child poison.

4- Make certain toys, crib, and other child-chewed objects have non-toxic paint.

Workshop area:

1- Keep children a safe distance away when you're operating power tools.

2-Always be present when older children are using power tools: be there to supervise.

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3- Lock non-portable power tools when you've finished a job.

4- Keep all firearms in your home under lock and key.

5- Keep children away from power mowers: disconnect the spark plug when not in use.

6- Never toss used razor blades or broken glass in a wastebasket where little ones can find them. Wrap such hazards and dispose of them permanently.

Toys:-

1- Don't buy toys with sharp edges.

2- Electrical toys should have the UL label.

Projectiles for missile toys should have rubber tips and be given only to older children.

4- Younger children should not have access to toys meant for older ones.

Swimming:

1- Teach your child to swim early.

2- Don't permit children to swim or play in the water without adult supervision.

3- Caution children about swimming in unfamiliar water. Tell them about the "buddy" system

4- Back yard pools attract kids. Keep them covered or fenced.

5- Toddler should never be left alone in the pool or bathtub.

6- You and other adults in the family should learn CPR and mouth-to-mouth artificial respiration techniques: it could save your child's life!

Bicycling:

1- Choose the style and size bike best suited to your child's age, capabilities, and physical development.

2- Very young children never should be allowed to ride bikes on the street. Enforce that rule - absolutely!

3- Make sure older children who do cycle on the streets know and follow the rules of the road.

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4- Make certain the bicycle is in good mechanical condition and all headlights and reflectors working.

5- Obey all traffic signs, warnings, lights.

Riding school bus:

1- Get to bus stop on time.

2- Stay on curb or well off the road; never on road.

3-Use handrail when boarding to prevent fall or slip.

4-Keep aisle clear of books, etc. and never put hands, arm or head out the window.

5- Don't throw things - either inside or out of the bus.

6- No horseplay. Horsing around could distract driver and cause accident.

7- Be careful leaving bus. Kepp at least 10 feet away as bus pulls out.

8- Always obey bus driver!

Your children will learn safety rules by repetition, reprimand, and reward. And many learn by imitating you. One 'rule' is an absolute - you must set the example, always!

* * * * * *

Conclusions

"The reason teaching has to go on
is that children are not born human;
they are made so."
- Jacque Barzum

And much of teaching is not a school responsibility; as parents, we have that 'parenting' responsibility! All parents share many, many dimensions of child-rearing. Among them, none is more important to the future well-being of children than the on-going responsibility to encourage, enrich, and extend the learning horizons of their kids: I repeat - none is more important!

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